

# THE SSA NEWS



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## Coming Soon!

- Annual Blue Ribbon Child Abuse Prevention Campaign, March 31, 2004
- Daylight Savings Time begins, April 4, 2004

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER by Angelo Doti

This month marks the annual celebration of the recognition of social workers' contributions to human services. The celebration recognizes all of the agencies that have the classification of social worker, including the SSA classifications of Social Worker Assistants, Social Workers I, Social Workers II, Senior Social Workers and all of the supervisory classifications. Social workers are one of the overall largest workforces in county government.

Let's touch upon just a few areas of social work activities. The social work specialties include child welfare, mental health, adult protective services, in-home supportive services, CalWORK'S case management, CalLEARN, group counselors and

related assistance activities. I'm sure I have missed other tasks and for those I may have missed, I apologize. You have my respect and thanks.

Recalling my own experience, I began as an AFDC social worker years before the Federal separation of services and eligibility. After a stint in "Child Neglect," the forerunner of Child Welfare Services, I returned to graduate school full time to earn my Master's in Social Work with a specialty in Child Social Policy. I graduated in 1972 – a fair commitment to giving back a "few years later." I never have regretted that commitment.

Just back from Sacramento, I heard more about social

workers' contributions statewide. The idea of starting even earlier than the Bachelor's of Social Work is being discussed. That's right, a focus in high school to encourage students to become human services major earlier than college entry is being considered. This would be designed to help avoid situations where applicants gravitate to the field just because they need employment. This is highly encouraging and makes our education tuition reimbursement program, combined with local college affiliations, even more critical and financially enticing.

So, to all of you in the "social work family," congratulations and take a well-deserved bow!



*"We send him and his  
National Guard  
Reserve unit off with  
lots of prayers and  
many good wishes."*

## Social Services Agency Hero Deployed to Iraq

Juan Reynoso, Family Self-Sufficiency Computer Support Liaison (CSL) Coordinator, will ship out to Iraq the week of March 15, 2004.

Juan was a Sergeant in the Marine Corps and on active duty for 13 years prior to joining the county family. He joined the National Guard Reserve in December 2002. Uncle Sam once again called Juan to active duty the beginning of this year. He has been in training for the past two and one half months in preparation to serve in Iraq for the next year.

Juan's wife, Reyna and their six

children will really miss him. His five sons and one daughter range in age from eighteen years to four years of age. In June 2004, Marcio, Juan's oldest son, will graduate from high school. This fall, his youngest son plans to start kindergarten.

Juan began his career in SSA as an Eligibility Technician in the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children/Food Stamps program almost 12 years ago. He also worked as an Income Earnings Verification System/Eligibility Technician and Eligibility Supervisor as well as a district

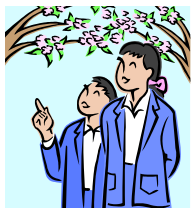
Computer Support Liaison. In October 2001, Juan was promoted to his current assignment as CSL Coordinator.

Family Self-Sufficiency is very proud of Juan and appreciates his patriotic dedication to our country. We send him and his National Guard Reserve unit off with lots of prayers and many good wishes. Once Juan gets settled in over there, he will let us know what we should include in our "care packages."



**Juan Reynoso and family.**

*"Children Blossom  
With Love"*



## Blue Ribbon Event Highlights Child Abuse Prevention Month

On March 31, 2004, The Raise Foundation (formerly Prevent Child Abuse-Orange County) will kick off the Annual Blue Ribbon Child Abuse Prevention Campaign. The kick-off will be held at the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art at 9:30 a.m. This year's theme is "Children Blossom With Love" and the

keynote speaker is nationally syndicated radio show host, Hugh Hewitt. This year's Blue Ribbon Award recipient is Sandy Segerstrom-Daniels and the Shining Light Award recipient is Lee Newman. At the end of the ceremony Dr. Michael Riley, Director of Children and Family Services,

will read the names of the five children who died in Orange County in 2003 as a result of child abuse. A bell will be rung and a dove will be released after each name is read. For more information on the Blue Ribbon Event please call 714-258-2272.



## March Proclaimed Social Worker Month

This month, the Social Services Agency (SSA) and the Health Care Agency (HCA) sent approximately 35 social workers to be recognized at the March 16, 2004 meeting of the Board of Supervisors. The Board Chair presented a resolution to Ang Doti, Director of Social Services and to Julie Poulson, Director of the Health Care Agency. In SSA and HCA, there are more than 1,000 social workers. Some excerpts

from the Board Resolution are as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the Social Work profession developed from a common concern for humanity, a belief in the dignity and worth of each individual, a commitment to promoting the welfare of individuals served, and a dedication to working to promote social justice; and

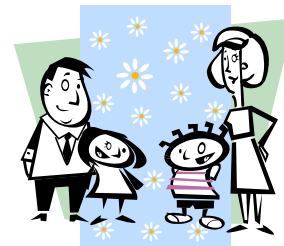
**WHEREAS**, Social Workers

within the County of Orange are held in the highest regard and exemplify the best in moral and ethical performance, holding true the belief that by helping one individual at a time, the community as a whole will benefit through their efforts. Congratulations to all of our hardworking county social workers!



County social workers assemble in honor of Social Worker Month.

*"...the Social Work profession developed from a common concern for humanity..."*



## California Welfare Information Network Connectivity

Submitted by Carolyn Geraldi and Nancy Mangano



Go-Live for Orange County is February 2006! There is a lot to do in order to be ready. We have had two Data Purification Rounds and each has shown improvement. We get one more try before our full load test in January 2005. That is our last chance to find out what needs to be fixed and to get it corrected before going live in CalWIN. The transformation committees are gearing up for action and you will hear more from them about CalWIN activities soon.

The CalWIN Training Region is scheduled to be connected in Orange County at 888 N. Main St. and Training and Career Development on April 26, 2004. Once the environment is active we will be able to touch, feel, test, and really find out what CalWIN is all about. Early training by project staff from Sacramento will be held from April 12th through April 23 for Training and Career Development, CalWIN Security, CalWIN Application Support, and other CalWIN

training with San Diego staff and it is limited to 10 employees from each county. Of course those who attend this training will begin training additional CalWIN staff so we can really see what CalWIN is going to do for us.

We have reason to celebrate that connectivity and early training for this fantastic system is finally coming. A big Orange County welcome to CalWIN.

*"It's coming, it's coming, CalWIN connectivity is coming! (Amen, it's no longer Cal-WHEN!)."*

We welcome your input regarding this newsletter. For information on submitting articles, contact Debbie Kroner at (714) 541-7734  
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- \* Articles for the April issue of The SSA NEWS are due by April 5, 2004!
- \* Please limit your articles to 225 words maximum and send them via email.  
 Thanks.



## KUDOS



**Adult Protective Services Staff and Senior Social Worker Darrin Wheaton:** Adult Services Deputy Director Rebecca Guider received a letter from the coordinator of the Elder Abuse Forensic Center thanking Adult Protective Services (APS) and APS Social Worker Darrin Wheaton for participating in training of law enforcement officers. The letter read as follows: "On behalf of the entire Elder Abuse Forensic Center team, I would like to thank you for Adult Protective Services' participation in the Elder Abuse Investigation Training for Law Enforcement Officers on November 3-4, 2003 in Newport Beach. In total, 28 police officers and investigators from around the County of Orange attended the conference. The training included presentations from the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the Office of the District Attorney, the Public Administrative/Public Guardian, Community Service Programs, Adult Protective Services, and University of California Irvine Program in Geriatrics. Further, Darrin Wheaton's presentation was a true highlight of the training. By all accounts, the training was a great success, and your agency's participation was a key factor in that success. In fact, an overwhelming majority of participants said that the training was useful and that they would utilize the Forensic Center in the future. We are now looking forward to planning a similar training, open to law enforcement officers throughout the state of California, to take place in the spring of 2004. Sincerely yours, Laura Giles, Coordinator, Elder Abuse Forensic Center."

**Ronald Toole, Sr. Social Worker, Integrated Continuing Services III, Children and Family Services:** "I want to take a moment of your time to share my feelings and experience with Ron Toole. He has been my social worker for the majority of my case the past two years. In that time he has been a great benefit to my children and me. At first I was defiant and difficult towards everyone involved. I blamed everyone and anything for my troubles. I was a mess. Ron, through his patience and real dedication to his job, helped me calm down, to be more receptive to the programs offered and learn to take responsibility. It has always been my experience that Ron is thorough and accurate with his reports. He cares a great deal for his clients, their children and their welfare. Whenever I needed a referral or progress report he had it ready in an efficient manner. Ron assisted me in ways that I could stay focused. He always keeps his appointments and is genuinely concerned. There have been many occasions when Ron went beyond the call of duty to be supportive of my family and me. I think there should be more people like him in the system. He is definitely an asset to your department. If the Court decides that they want six more months of family services, it won't be bad. Ron makes it okay. I am grateful to know him and to have him as a part of my success. (Excerpt from a letter sent by client, forwarded by Alix Kaainoa-Thomas, Senior Social Services Supervisor, Children and Family Services.)

**Mary Resna, Eligibility Technician, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Medi-Cal Specialization Regional Centre:** "I wanted to take a moment to commend one of your employees, Mary Resna, for her exceptional assistance in dealing with the processing of a Medicare application for a client. It is my professional opinion that Ms. Resna went above and beyond the expectations of her duties. She displayed professionalism, diligence, patience and persistence in helping me with this rather difficult case. I wish to thank Mary Resna for the excellent attention I received on behalf of my client and myself." (Based on a message sent by a Registered Guardian, forwarded by Elaine Gourdin, Program Manager II and Mary Wuerfl, Deputy Director.)

**Dinah Torgerson, Assistant District Manager, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Central Regional Office:** "I want to thank you for the help you gave me in regards to my sister. I believe that without your help my sister could have ended up being hospitalized. It didn't matter that it was late on a Friday that I phoned. You immediately began to find out the necessary information. You not only gave the names and phone numbers of others that you had contacted, but you also provided your phone number just in case we hit more snags. It is this type of caring that sets you apart from others. Working for Riverside County, I know how frustrating the system can be for clients and their families. Please know that my family and I are very grateful for the help you gave my sister. Thank you and may God bless your kindness." (Based on a client letter, forwarded by Ellen Lacey, District Manager, Central Regional Office.)

**Donna Oraby, Long Term Care Eligibility Technician, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Medi-Cal Specialization Regional Centre:** "You know when this thing is done I hope I have the chance to meet you in person. You have been just great. I don't think I would have gotten through this whole thing without your calming influence." (Based on a message sent by a client, forwarded by Elaine Gourdin, Program Manager II and Mary Wuerfl, Deputy Director.)